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A LEARNING NEWSROOM FOR JOURNALISM STUDENTS



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next ride
underway
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WONDER, MARCH 4, 2012

CONESTOGA COLLEGE, BELLEVILLE, ONT.

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44TH YEAR — NO. 5

GUELPH'S CON-G ATTRACTS ALL KINDS

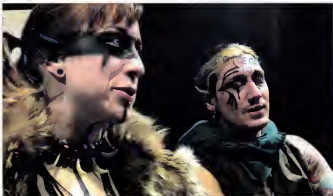


PHOTO BY ALLAN FORD

Fashion and look of underwear, L&P, underwear (con-g goes to the joys of live-action role playing, for story and more photos, see Pages 6 and 7)

Preds football recruits Conestoga students

BY RYAN BARNES

The Twin Cities Predators football team is recruiting new members for their next season on the Canadian Soccer Football League (CSFL) site, and they have targeted Conestoga students to help them achieve their goal.

Head coach Tim Annett and head of recruitment Jim MacArthur were at the college for four days to try and gain interest and recruit Conestoga students to become part of the Predators' upcoming season, which starts in July.

The Predators endured a difficult season last year — but MacArthur believes they can "quickly turn it around and become a championship level team."

"Last year's record was terrible, our record was offensively 0 and 6 but we weren't as bad as the record makes

us sound," said MacArthur. "We were extremely competitive in every game and were even leading significantly in some."

He attributed the team's poor results to the challenges of entering second year: the team brought in a new head coach and started working on a new philosophy and system.

The team's defence was the main reason they were able to keep their losses so tight — they led the entire country-wide 20-team league in take-aways and interceptions.

Offensively though, they lacked a running game. They will also be recruiting potential quarterbacks since their current QB is in his last year of eligibility; players can only play until they are 23 years old.

This year's list last, the team will be looking to carry roughly 60-80 players on their

roster — around 10-15 of last year's roster were Conestoga College students.

"I wish our stadium was closer to the college so we could draw some fans from there as well."

— Jim MacArthur

"When students come for information — we discuss the kind of systems we want to run and our philosophies and attitudes towards the game itself," said MacArthur. "They can also talk to me to get a understanding of the business side of the program and what the financials mean."

MacArthur believes that the biggest challenge for the Predators recruiting efforts is

actually getting the word out so more people can be aware of the team and the opportunities available to potential players and fans.

"I wish our stadium was closer to the college so we could draw some fans from there as well," he said. "The college is a perfect fit for us not only from a recruiting perspective but from a fan base — the students could really adopt this team as being their team."

Despite that, the Predators haven't attempted to recruit at any other school in their three-year existence — they haven't felt the need to look any further than Conestoga's large pool of students.

We usually do get a lot of interest in potential players walk by there I come over and talk to us," he said. "The first entry level football — we want guys who really

want to play the game, we don't want guys who will come out once a month and just around because it's a nice level of football."

During the Predators' week, provide players with great opportunities — the coaching staff is making up almost entirely of ex-CFL players and the team is a team of the Toronto Argonauts as players will have a chance to catch the eye of scouts and move higher up the football chain.

The team will be back at Conestoga for an exhibition camp at the completion of the season on March 24 to evaluate the players who have shown a serious interest in joining the Predators.

Anyone still interested in joining can go to www.predatorsfootball.ca and fill in the player profile application under the "Become a Pro" tab.

Now deep thoughts ... with Conestoga College

Random questions answered by random students

What would be the first thing you would do if you won the lottery?



"Buy a case of nice light beer!"

Craig Townsend,
first-year
graphic design



"Buy a Nissan GT-R."

Mike Homan,
second-year
business admin



"Go on a trip to Mexico or somewhere warm."

Kara Holmes,
second-year
business admin



"Buy a big house."

Jacob Kiefer,
first-year
psychology



"Buy an old Mustang and give half to charity."

Benjamin Patel,
second-year
marketing



"Give half to charity and go on a trip to Vegas."

Katrina Berlier,
second-year
business admin

Just seven more weeks



**Rob
Mendicino**
Opinion

version, skipping classes and simply giving up too easily on projects and assignments are the worst ways of surviving.

None of the best gives advice for how to stay motivated and stay focused, and well and to get a pleasure out of a pleasure, really? These are the same things that are said to us as the importance of the program. I just want something better than a good deal and a leader to regulate the time that I want to be barely something right now.

Journalism students also all seem to be the best students "because" of their personal lives, which just adds to the effects of the program. Instead of work-

ing on my assignments when I'm not a much better of them in the college back in January. I've left everything until the last minute and now that myself I'm not under a mountain of paper that would challenge some of the greatest students of Mount Everest.

A lot of students have the attitude that the semester is over through March and don't realize the things will have to finish March and projects upon returning to school. It is always difficult to come back after a week off, but as long as you keep reminding yourself that the March term is nothing more you'll be fine.

So here I am writing of the Monday morning, which has become the best of my semester, Wednesday last I will even go through the next seven weeks with my essay and self-report card. And in my mind the words "just seven more weeks," keep repeating in my mind, just seven more weeks.

New degree program in the works

BY BRIAN BOWMAN

Conestoga College is looking to launch a new program in 2014.

At a board of governors meeting Feb. 20, members were told about the four-year bachelor of environmental public health degree program.

It will be introduced as an advanced standing program in 2014 and fully implemented by 2014.

Clare Monk, chair of education and life sciences at the

college and director of public health, says the program has been growing steadily over the past decade.

Similar programs are offered at only five post-secondary institutions across Canada, with only one in Ontario.

According to Monk, who formerly worked as a certified public health inspector, Conestoga's existing facilities, which include the new Institute of Food Processing Technology, a kitchen and a health clinic, would serve as

an ideal "living laboratory" for students in the program.

In the coming months, the college will push the program to both the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, and the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspection.

Monk expects the college will know by early 2014 whether or not the program gets a green light.

The college next board of governors meeting is scheduled for May 27 in the Dean's complex.

COUNSELLOR'S CORNER:

Coming Out

Everyone has a sexual orientation. We may feel sexual - emotionally and physically - to members of the opposite sex, members of the same sex, or to people of both sexes. Sometimes, we may even feel as though we are a gender different from that of our body - and then feel confused about our relationship to others and our choices for a partner.

Conestoga's resources suggest that some of our people are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered. Typically, while heterosexual people participate in dating throughout adolescence, people of an alternative sexual orientation may begin to explore their sexuality only after they have left the formative years: their family, hometown, or previous personal identity.

Some people make the transition to coming out smoothly; accepting and a sexuality may feel like a natural of finally "coming home." However, for others it is a stark shift with pain, self-doubt and lack of support. This may be complicated by feelings contrary to messages received while growing up: one's definition of "normal," or one's religious upbringing.

Gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people need a supportive environment that nurtures positive feelings about their sexual orientation. The need is understanding, accepting, and confirming one's sexual orientation as a natural part of being human. If you are confused about your sexuality, need support, or would like to know of resources available in the community and at the College, counsellors in Counselling Services can help.

A Message from Counselling Services

More than a bike ride

BY KAREN MILAM

The third annual Grand River Hospital Ride for Cancer kicked off Feb. 21 at Whitlock Civil Bug in Waterloo. The ride itself isn't for another five months but the training preparation and fundraising has officially begun.

On Aug. 24, people will gather for the 120-kilometre non-competitive ride across Waterloo Region. The night before the ride there will be a reception and silent auction. On ride day, those involved will get to enjoy a barbecue after the ride and later attend a live auction and raise dinner to celebrate.

The Ride for Cancer launch began with an informal cocktail reception for the sponsors, VIP guests, committee members, Grand River Hospital Foundation (GRHF) staff, people affected by cancer and the riders. It was an opportunity for them to socialize, motivate, reinforce and talk about the upcoming ride in August. The event was hosted by GRHF's Food FM's radio personality Angie McE. She looked off the speech portion of the night by talking about what the riders should expect as the month event.

None healthier and motivated speakers were there, including Olympic medalists Steve Nouri and Chris Hinrichs, cancer survivor Marcel Fortin, cancer

committee member of Ride for Cancer (Ride for Cancer) and the executive director of GRHF, Nancy Howard.

Porterhouse is riding for the second time. He was first diagnosed with cancer in 2008 and went through a lot of chemotherapy and radiation for the next 18 months, which proved to be very hard on his system.

"Throughout the whole ordeal, I always tried to stay very positive and even confident that I would beat this disease. I wasn't going to go out without a fight," he said.

Porterhouse said he never thought he would be privileged to take part in the ride although he has only participated in one so far, he has attended every ride since 2008.

After watching his good friend and inspiration on the ride in 2010, Porterhouse decided he would no longer be on the sidelines and he would become one of the riders. On Dec. 11, 2010, he officially committed himself to the ride and set a goal to have the highest donation total. On his team, he had his wife's daughter, his son and two of his good friends. Porterhouse found the training aspect to be difficult because he hadn't rode a bike for years. He focused on his training and the team took care of the fundraising side. Together, they raised a total

of \$25,800. It wasn't the high end overall donation total but it exceeded the amount of money he had hoped to raise.

Looking up to the ride, Porterhouse said he was overwhelmed by all of the support he received from friends, family and even from people he had never met before. He even formed friendships with some of the riders after his first Ride for Cancer.

"The whole event itself, it surprised my expectations. I got stronger. I got more confidence. The outlook on my life got better. More than I've ever looked back to those dark days," he said.

At each ride, the individual who raises the most money receives a yellow jersey and are awarded the honour of leading the ride. Don Kierstead, last year's top fundraiser, made Porterhouse and himself out that he postponed his last surgery in order to take part in the ride. He was so excited by Porterhouse's determination, training and recovery that he gave him the yellow jersey.

"To me, that was a champion," Kierstead said.

Porterhouse's motivation to participate in the ride was to give back to Grand River Hospital for all the help and support they gave him while he was battling his disease. He



PHOTO BY KAREN MILAM

Ben Kierstead, left, and cancer survivor Marcel Fortin held up a Ride for Cancer jersey at the event's launch party Feb. 21. The ride will take place Aug. 24 across Waterloo Region.

said the cancer treatment center in Waterloo and the hospital has great doctors and nurses.

"They did everything for me," he said.

Nancy Howard is someone who spends her time helping those in need at the hospital but is also battling cancer. GRHF helps the hospital to provide exceptional health care by raising funds. When it comes to the Ride for Cancer, she is amazed by the camaraderie of the cyclists and how they come together to not only raise funds but to become a team.

"The beautiful journey I think

that I have seen right now and repeat, cyclists has been a big part of making this event a success. Their passion has been my highlight," she said.

One of the committee members and top fundraisers, Kierstead, Porterhouse, has been involved with the Ride for Cancer from the very beginning in 2005. In August, he will be participating in his third ride.

"It means so much to do something in the community, for an amazing community deal, for with everything fundraising makes our lives and families these people," he said.



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Guelph Campus: March 23, 9:30 am to 12:00 pm, 460 Speedvale Ave. W.

Waterloo Campus: March 23, 11:30 am to 2:00 pm, 108 University Ave. E.

www.conestoga.on.ca/openhouse

WHAT
YOU DO
HERE
COUNTS
OUT
THERE

Hockey parents need to let kids play

BY STATE GOVERNMENT

Behind every minor hockey player in Canada — up to \$10,000 in any given season — there are hockey parents. And while these duties range from chauffeuring to cheerleading, the guardians behind the glass are more than ready. They're also an important support for

In recent weeks, a pair of separate off-the-record incidents have shifted the spotlight to the steroids used and exposed the dark side of our national sport.

First there was Jason Boyd, who was attending his 23-year-old son's hockey game at Winnipeg's Southdale Community Centre.

When a player on the opposing team fell to the ice following a body check (a hit which resulted in a penalty for a foulshot), Boyd harassed the injured player, repeatedly rolling him a "wink."

After Floyd was approached by the father of the kid on the recording and on the lot, he threatened to "ruin his inspirational platoon in." The entire incident, which was caught on tape, went viral on YouTube. One of the most shocking details of the footage was Floyd holding a baby in his arms.

Closer to home, a Cambridge man allegedly assaulted an official at his 17 year old son's game at Preston Amphitheatre on Feb. 18.

In this case, the parent allegedly grabbed a Jameson and pushed him against the wall after a player on his son's team was escorted off the ice. The accused, it turns out, is Const. Neil Minchuk, a 12-year veteran of the Guelph Police Service.

And while these incidents may be extreme, what makes them so disturbing is that they're far from isolated.

According to Todd Cook, president of the Lead Belcher Miner Hockey Association, mathematics like Boyd's age of 120,000,000.

"We can't go on in hockey with the way it is right now with the fans and everything else," he told Global Warming. "We have to put a stop to this nonsense."

Not only does it embarrass and humiliate these kids it also goes against the values sport is meant to teach. How can we expect our next generation to learn sportsmanship, leadership and respect when we behave like children ourselves?

When it comes to supporting our awesome athletes from the islands, it's important we set our age – not our skin tone.

The virus haemagglutinated the position of the newspaper, not necessarily the subject.

Letters are welcome

Spoke welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should be signed and include the name and telephone number of the writer. Writers will be contacted for verification. No unsigned letters will be published. Letters should be no longer

any letter for publication, Email letters to: www.aaenonline.com with the subject line "Letter to the Editor" or bring them in Room 1C30 at the Davis campus.



Guns have got to go

In our wonderful world full of knowledge and technology, why are so many of our youth living needlessly? The type of death that happened in the Toronto case last month used to be something we thought only happened south of the border. Now, it's here and on the rise. In under a month, three teenagers died as a result of being hit by either cars

My first question is: where are they getting these guys and, mindfully, why is a CRJ to settle our differences with guns? Why can't people just talk and work things like they used to?

I'm not saying that's OK, but it doesn't leave a family missing a son or brother all because someone didn't like the way someone looked at him. The truth is, if you want to talk adults who behaved someone at high school if they could change what they had done, the majority would say they wish they had! I don't see it and that it was sense or justice.

We all have watched the news and seen young boys fighting war: around the world and have been horrified that children are carrying guns. We know gun kill. But, after the Sandy Hook massacre on Dec. 14, 2012, where 20 year-old Adam Lanza



Wendy Enns-Matthews

shot and killed 20 children and six adults in the United States and talk of a gun ban, what happens? One sales went through the roof as people feared they now wouldn't be able to buy them. Instead of people talking about getting guns off the street, they lined up to buy more. What is wrong with people?

I'm the type of person who always sees the brighter side of life. When my daughter tells me about a situation, she says I always rule or defend the other person. The truth is I'd rather give "them" the benefit of the doubt than they themselves were good. When they look at other people, I don't like them giving they looks. Rather, they're squinting because they don't have their glasses on or their thought was they wished they looked good so that's selfish. It's not about a person's own appearance.

Have you ever (gasp) someone say, "Believe I know you I thought you were a bitch?" But actually you're really nice."

I used to get in trouble all the time because of the apparent lack I gave someone told in reality it was just me looking. My grandmother once told me I gave her a look that could kill. Those days it's referred to as "death eyes." The truth was I had been listening to her very intently and she had been speaking German which I was in the process of learning. I felt terrible, but that is just how simple things can be.

It used to be girls didn't physically fight. But now they get down on the ground and punch each other out. I'd hate to think of what would happen if they had guns in their hands.

Days, on the other hand, used to have flat lights. But now they pull out a gun and settle the score.

"We need to get guns off the streets and we need to get kids back to being kids. We don't want to end up like the United States."

SPOKE

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Not all who are blind lack vision

BY JESSICA REIDNER

This is the second of a five-part series on visual impairment and what it is like for the people who live with it.

From the moment we enter the education system it is drilled into our heads that to achieve greatness we must achieve great grades. We are convinced that our future success depends on how well we can learn the material we are told memorized examples, applied to a variety of situations.

So much of how school is taught is geared toward the majority of students who have full vision, but for students who have experienced vision loss, learning becomes a different kind of challenge.

Michael Melnick, a University student at the University of Manitoba has viewed the world through this perspective since he was in Grade 4, when his glasses no longer corrected his vision and he had to become better acquainted with technology.

As a result of Melnick's condition, it provides type of unusual dependence on his on medical team.

"I can't see anything details. For example, if you're standing five feet away from me I'll be able to know if you're your body shape and height but I won't be able to see your face or have any confidence," he said. "My perception is all good and steady."

Although he says seeing real things is in full form, Melnick has had to turn the traditional school advice upside down.

"I was on the outside of the loop initially. I was off to the side because it took me longer to do homework. Almost every evening I couldn't go and hang out with friends," he said, adding that even though he felt behind in some respects he never lost his confidence.

"Despite my disability I was on the honour roll through out high school and actually graduated with honours." Melnick's vision loss may have posed some obstacles in his path, but it has inspired him to do more, not less.

In middle school, he would stay after class with a teacher who would teach him SPSS, something that sparked an insatiable curiosity and a new idea - Melnick's World.



in turning Mark and video code into something read and was propelled not only by his desire to be a game designer, but also by his visual and musical art.

"Every year I'd bring in something new for me to try and I'd do a report and add it to my website. I just kept developing it," said Melnick, whose website has grown to include his own personal writing and artwork.

"The greatest piece of technology Melnick has found in recent years is the iPad. "I've done two presentations in my school district on how great the accessibility is on the iPad and Apple devices in general. Since then, the department of education has been buying iPads each year to give to our most impaired students."

Always having a lower hand on his high school, he is looking forward to what he should a minor degree in psychology and a post full of remarkable challenges.

"I chose psychology because I feel that it will completely challenge my mental ability and skill compared to just, putting an offer on life working at a bank where it's a basic routine. I find psychology very inspiring because as you go along and you learn and develop your skill and abilities, it develops your



PHOTO BY JESSICA REIDNER

Magnifiers come in all different sizes and levels of magnification. They are essential tools for people with eyesight vision loss.

overall self."

Melnick has had time to adjust to his visual impairment and learn how to overcome the obstacles at present rate but, but this is not always the case for people who lose their vision.

Andrew Sylvest, a first year general business student at Conestoga College, lost his vision all at once when he was driving and crashed into a tree just over a year ago.

"The shock affected his entire life, leaving him in a coma for four weeks and in the hospital for three weeks after he required numerous tests."

For Sylvest the process of losing his vision was a matter of waking up and not being able to see. There was no time to understand what was hap-

pening, just to realize that things would never be the same.

Sylvest used the first challenges of school haven't been shared him in the least.

"Without vision you have to remember everything and there are no more hand signs. You have to be really good on the computer and be able to remember everything," he said. "It's really easy to imagine a classroom because I can kind of remember how it used to be set up."

Sylvest has mentioned on about 50 evenings throughout his first year at Conestoga, though he feels there is some improvement in how the school is equipped for visually impaired students.

"My biggest concern is the computers. I use Macintosh computers and they're just

not readily available at Conestoga. I'm forced to use JAWS (a screen reading software) but they only have one computer with it."

While being blind has created many obstacles that hinder the Sylvest, the biggest challenge he faces came from inside himself.

"It takes a fair amount of time to do something when you don't have sight and it can be quite frustrating at times. Just trying to keep your head up and stay motivated is the hardest part."

Although staying motivated can be difficult at times for both Sylvest and Melnick, neither of them feel completely limited by their disabilities.

"I can do anything the same as anyone else, just in a different way," Melnick said.

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COMIC-CON 101

Here are some useful tips to help you survive your next comic-con:

■ Schedule

What do you want to see/read? A panel? Autograph session? Just walk the booths and browse? Create a schedule before hand to maximize your opportunities.

■ Timing

Seasoned veterans of a convention may be up before the birds to get a spot in line, so make sure to beat them to it. Lines will be everywhere, so expect a long wait even when arriving early.

■ Badges

Without your badge (or ticket) you won't be seeing anything, so hang onto it, even when inside the venue.

■ Backpack it

Bring your own backpack (not a purse!) and keep your wallet and valuables inside! Bring a lunch and lots of water as it's all very expensive inside the convention.

■ Money

Some places do not accept debit or credit, but there is usually an ATM around the venue.



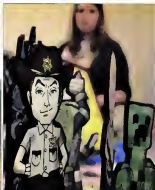
Costume specialist of Ice Phoenix Art, Marina Sokoloff, shows off her polydolls. Ice Phoenix Art will be a first time guest this year.



It's the best of both worlds: comic dressed as predator Jeff Tylson. Assistant Editor Reggie from his bookworm-nemesis, The Hobbit.

Guelph's comic-con Con-G boasts

Daleks and zombies and elves



Popular comic book series and AMC show The Walking Dead, was a popular theme at this year's Con-G. Before prolonged wait times from charity deputy Rick Grimes was one of many from stand-up figurines available for purchase.



Compassion comics, of Burlington, sells a variety of anime-themed stuffed toys.

There have been shows, clinics, seminars and panel discussions in British Columbia for years, if you know where to look. An event for all things geek, anime, otaku, manga, there or WWW, Com-Con, a long-running event that is about the Convention, Com-Con, has been delighting employees, nerds and comic book fans alike for five years.

Held from Feb. 22 to 24 at the Delta Hotel in Gastown, the event attracted over 1,500 people, most of a like-minded local crowd and part-time customer Sabrina Stelmach managed a booth at the show this year for the first time.

"I walk in, here with a rainbow-coloured wig and no one looks at me weird," she said. "They all run up to me and say 'Oh my god, the wig looks great. Where did you get it?' (Can I give you a hug?)"

Indeed, Com-Con is well known for creating a safe haven for the shy and socially awkward nerds. Along with the usual artist and comic tables, over 70 different panels and events were held over the three days, including geek speed dating, wig styling, and a martial arts workshop. Cosplay 101 and armour making. High-profile topics ranged from My Little Pony to Doctor Who, Star Wars and Star Trek.

Also featured were Pokémon and other gaming tables, anime and manga panels, sword fights, a weekend-long interactive murder mystery, the Dr. Who lounge and the Masquerade, an elaborate costume contest.

Special guests included Derek the Bird Big Brother of the show, Dr. Holmstrom and animated voice-over artist Rob Paulsen. Many will recognize Paulsen as the voice of Yoda on Star Wars. He'll be in the original Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles cartoon and Puck from Puck and the Bunch, he'll be in the anime to a point of "War!"

One of the biggest promises at Com-Con this year was Vancouver-based Underworld LARP. An immersive game, usually played outdoors, LARPing, or live-action role playing, combines fantasy and horror. Players create and live as their characters 24 hours a day during a game, which follows a linear storyline dictated by the actions of the characters. Much like being out in a Dungeons and Dragons campaign or living a video game, relationships form, alliances are broken and combat ensues. A complex rule book

outlines race, talents and skills, two shapes combat, it often includes spells, shields, weapon damage and healing.

Many players become very attached to their characters. "When you play a character for five years, it's like a second you," Underworld co-owner David Apple told the National Post.

LARPing comes down to being that all too well. "I feel like I could write it to my character at anytime I'm just as linked to my character as I am to me."

Goodbye, who is from Owen Sound, is used to being judged by people who don't understand the joys of live action role playing. He even wrote the Com-Con for the simple reason of being able to fit in. "There is a social stigma against it (LARPing), but in general everyone here has enjoyed hearing about Underworld," he said.



Wally Cole, co-owner and co-founder of the Canada Otaku-themed attraction in Vancouver, is seen at the show. Cole has been creating costumes and building props since the 70s and is the owner of the event.

Scientology: The controversy continues

BY BRAD COHENMAN

Many of controversy revolves around the Church of Scientology, a religious movement founded by L. Ron Hubbard in 1950 that with a new location opening in Cornwallis on Feb. 16, the church hopes to attract the masses.

"Our philosophy is totally based on profitability," said Catherine Rousseau, a staff member of the church, referring to the church's teachings of self-improvement in the modern world.

"Scientology is a religion in the true sense of the meaning — and it is one society at knowledge about life."

According to Wikipedia, Scientology teaches that people are immortal beings who have forgotten their true nature. The church attempts to use methods of spiritual rehabilitation, in which practitioners aim to consciously re-experience painful or traumatic events to aid followers in freeing themselves from the limiting effects of their past. Study materials and auditing can make available to members in various specified quarters.

Scientology is a legally recognized religion in a number of countries, including the United States. However,

Canada is among the nations that does not assign state the government as a legitimate religion.

The new, multi-million dollar facility, located at 1880 Bishop St., offers a wide variety of courses to aid anyone of any creed looking to address problems on particular areas of their life.

"We have life improvement courses that address different areas — the raising of children, communication in relationships even marriage — and they're knowledge you can take away," said Rousseau.

Comments by Laura Brown, chair of religious studies at the University of Waterloo and an expert on new religious movements who's studied Scientology for decades, said few for these courses are part of the controversy.

"It eventually started to become quite aggressive as the courses started to multiply and the fees started to increase," said Dawson.

"America evangelized and teleprospecting originally are running large business enterprises — but Scientology is a little more explicit about it." In addition to his improvement courses, the church sells Hubbard's books printed in house, for those interested in the teachings of Scientology.

"More and more people nowadays are wanting to find out for themselves and realize that we're someone as opposed to being in an environment that is very dogmatic," said Rousseau. "We're doing everything we could to make it accessible."

Published in 1950, Hubbard's book, *Diagnosis: The Modern Science of Mental Health* was the book that started the movement and remains the most popular today. But as many books and scriptures followed it, so did the controversy.

"They studied a lot of the traditional religions about how a religion supposed to operate," said Dawson. "It started out much more in a kind of psychotherapy than a religion with doctrine, and it evolved into Scientology in less and more with various scriptures and scriptures by Hubbard."

"They are combining notions coming from a wide variety of sources, modern and religion, eastern and western religions, and that, of course, causes some controversy," he said.

"Their core beliefs are plausible and explainable and there's no plausible or no logic at all of any other religion. If you want to prove the core beliefs of Christianity, they're equally as flawed from a modern or scientific perspective."



PHOTO BY BRAD COHENMAN

Lecture DVDs of Church of Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard line a wall at a new church in Cornwallis.

Rousseau, a Scientologist, for 14 years said, "When you look at any big movement and looking for the good of the people, it always ends up having something."

While the Church of Scientology is open to people of all faiths, it's grounded in its interactions with the world, said Dawson. Having received

a tremendous amount of critical attention from the media and historical material about Scientology, Dawson believes some of their promises to be justified.

"They're meant to be criticized by becoming very defensive and offensive," said Dawson, "meaning the church will — are to intimidate people."

MARCH 4 - 8

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Make sure you are pet ready

BY ASHLEY DUNN

It's hard to find a Canadian that has never at least at her lifetime had a pet. Whether they are currently a pet owner or they had a beloved dog, cat or goldfish as a child, most Canadians have shared their home with an animal at some point. This constant level with animals can lead some people to decide to bring home a new pet before they know all the work, time or money involved. Here are some tips on what you need to know before welcoming a new pet.

For starters, many people don't quite realize the cost of owning a pet. A basic vet checkup for a cat or dog usually starts around \$30 and that can go up quickly if your pet needs special treatments or medications. These bills can be considerably larger if you are purchasing a puppy or kitten which needs shots and possibly surgery. The cost of pet food and toys also adds up quickly.

The food and medical expenses, even usually just about \$30 to \$50 per month," said Dr. Lee, a veterinary student at the University of Guelph. "Dogs can cost \$50 to \$100. That all depends on what breeds you're buying and how much you pump your pet but even if you try to stick with the largest products it still adds up."

Lee suggests going with

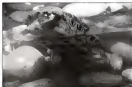


PHOTO BY ASHLEY DUNN

Puppies can be a unique choice of pet, but they need food, kibble and many of them eat live grains, or even live mice.

something a little more low maintenance such as a goldfish or a hamster if you're worried about the cost of adopting a pet.

Another thing pet owners often forget to consider is the fact that they must pet into their pets. Many parents or grandparents buy puppies to give for children. "I'll love it and love it and walk it every day," the six-year-old will say, but the likelihood of that child walking up at it was to wait that puppy everyday is also to none. Dogs need to exercise, cats' litter boxes need to be cleaned, small animals need their cages cleaned, even fish-bowl water should be changed regularly.

Obviously no matter what

pet you get you're going to have to clean up their poop. If you can't deal with that you shouldn't be a pet owner," said Dr. Emily Marshall, a Guelph resident and pet owner. Marshall currently has a dog and having had says that at their peak her family had three litters, two had pups, a tank full of goldfish, a dog, a hamster and even a neighbourhood squirrel that would stop by their door every day for a snack.

No matter what pet you are thinking of getting for yourself or a loved one remember that the pet owner has to be ready and willing to take proper care of the pet. A responsible pet owner equals a happy pet.

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Family Day celebrated at Winterloo

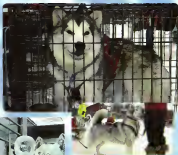
Winterloo Public Square was the site of the 10th annual Ice Dog Festival, which has now been renamed, "Winterloo," on Feb. 16. This year the festival expanded to welcome more winter-related events. Previously the event featured dogs of the month including huskies, with dog sled races and ice sculptures.



Families were able to take rides in a horse-drawn wagon, ride sleds, have a holiday dress-up parade or go through an ice maze. This year there was also a chili cook-off and THE MUSEUM opened with crafting for children.



What started out as something small in the downtown core has now become a community event. The festival is now three days, ending on Family Day. This gave the public the opportunity to take snowshoe walks through Laurel Creek, a new feature added this year. The goal is to give people a taste of Quebec's winters.



By Wendy
Cooks-Mah



Volunteering abroad: Who does it really benefit?

ENJOY AND PROVIDE
IN CHILDREN'S LIVES

With experience and good intentions, more people every year are taking off to develop countries on volunteer missions. This type of experience, which has been termed "voluntourism," is exactly what it sounds like: volunteer work mixed with travel.

Just while moving to a new place, doing fun activities and getting back sound like the perfect combination, there is a bit more to think about before jetting off than how much money is being or what children to pick.

There have been questions as to who really benefits from voluntourism and if it is actually doing more harm than good in developing countries. This is something that people need to consider before choosing an organization to volunteer abroad with.

First, "know what you're getting," said Irene Kelly, head of communications at Give International, an organization that sends skilled volunteers abroad to promote sustainable development.

"Just helping out and building a school may be a good thing in the short term, but that local kids can also do this, probably better than you," he said.

For that reason, it is important to carefully research a variety of organizations in order to find one that does not interfere with local employment, but also allows you to help out and use your skills.

At times, voluntourism has a hidden cost for its lack of sustainable development.

While many people choose long-term volunteer placements, many more are choosing short-term volunteer vacations. Students who want a unique experience over their summer holiday, or want work experience before applying to post-secondary school as the job, often volunteer for just a couple of weeks.

According to Kelly, "most Give International placements are not to two years in length, as experience has shown us that it takes more time to adapt, build relationships, be effective and make an impact."

That is not to say that short-term placements are not beneficial. But, like getting a summer vacation to a charity or temporarily sponsoring a child, depending on the job,



Project Abroad volunteers stand outside Abura Literacy School in Cape Coast, Ghana, where students show off their new uniforms, which were donated by the organization.

short-term volunteer placements can end up not being so helpful after all.

It's easy to help build a school, provide basic supplies or educate people about environmental conservation, but unless the volunteer organizations continue to follow up and maintain the projects over the volunteers' home projects quickly fall apart.

"A month may seem like a fairly long time in a completely different environment," said Benjamin Price, former Project Abroad volunteer. "But is it really a reasonable length of time to make a difference?"

The answer is making a difference while only volunteering for a short amount of time is to choose an organization that thinks about the long-term impact. Even if volunteers are unable to stay for months working alongside local groups who know firsthand what their community's needs are, the best way to create sustainable development.

For example, as the world's leading international volunteer organization, Project Abroad helps to "create local employment, wherever they need volunteers. And because they work with local colleagues at all levels, they are able to channel the skills of



Project Abroad volunteers help build a school, along with local workers, in Cape Coast, Ghana.

volunteers to places they are really needed."

"I find really strongly about working with people, and empowering them to find ways of combining these two different way of living with techniques that make sense," said Dennis Nwesi, a Toronto resident who volunteered with children in Ecuador.

Being culturally aware, respecting the lifestyle and taking local advice is a great

start to any volunteer placement. By doing this, volunteers are better able to make a long-term difference, as they are supplying the community with the help they really need. And this way all parties benefit.

"From a volunteer's point of view, voluntourism is done by a great way to understand other cultures a bit more - something which is vital in a global community," Price

said. "And if done properly, it can be very beneficial for the locals, too."

Nwesi added that people should "look for local organizations who know what their population needs, as well as organizations that are actively working with the community they are in, and follow the principle of not giving a hand out, but a hand up."